Christian Thoughts

FOR EVERY

DAY

Of the

MONTH,

With a

PRAYER:

Wherein is represented The Nature of Unfeigned Repentance, and of Perfect Love towards God.

LONDON,
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The AUTHOR to the READER.

I *Do not preſent you here with Diſcourſes which require much Study, or much Time for the Reading but with plain Thoughts, ſhort and eaſie, which you may underſtand without trouble, and read in a moment. Nor are theſe Thoughts purely moral, regarding meerly thoſe Duties which* the light of Nature *preſcribes ſuch as thoſe of* Epictetus *and* Seneca: *No, theſe are* Chriſtian Thoughts, *whoſe Subject*

is the most important Truth of our Faith, and the most exalted Rules of the Gospel.

These Thoughts are suitable not only to such, who live retired, and make great use of their reason, but also for those who being ingaged in the World have less opportunity for the things of God. For certainly such as are most devoted to the World, may yet sometimes lift up their Eyes towards Heaven; whatever be the Employment, how great soever mens Incumbrances, a man cannot but find time enough every day for a moments Reading; and tho Business may not admit of Solemn Meditations,

yet

yet it can no way hinder our Entertainment every day of one good Thought, ere we betake our ſelves to Buſineſs.

The Deſign of this little Book, is to furniſh men with Thoughts for every Day of the Month, and that you may reap any Advantage from 'em, you muſt obſerve this Method.

In the Morning, having adored God, and placed your ſelf as in his preſence, read the Thoughts for the Day, but read 'em diſtinctly; that you may fully underſtand them; if you have time enough, make a pauſe at the end of each Paragraph, before you paſs on to another: think it not enough

barely to understand the Truth or Rule which you read, but endeavour to penetrate the bottom of it, to relish it, and bring it close by a home Application. Do this in every Paragraph; if you are to busie for this, the plain reading of them may suffice. Christian Thoughts *like a Seal on Wax, if they sink but the least into our Minds never fail to leave behind them on the Soul some Impression, if you cannot find time for the reading these Thoughts in the Morning, or some other part of the Day, read 'em at leastwise at Night before you go to Bed.*

The Application which follows

lows immediately after the Thoughts, is important and plain; you must by no means omit this: it takes not up much time; thus to exert an Act of Vertue, and make a short Reflection.

The Sentences which are in the Close of all, are, as if it were an Abridgment, an Extract of the Thoughts of the Day: All their Sense and Force is here summ'd up, as it were in two words; they are short, and easie to be remembred; they are passionate, and very apt to awaken, to support and nourish the Soul, during the Day. These are Grains of Essence, that in a little Quantity

tity, contain great Vertue, and conſequently effect much in a ſhort time.

When you have read over the Thoughts of all the Days of the Month, you muſt read 'em over anew, that you may fully underſtand 'em & reap the true fruit of 'em. There are new Diſcoveries to be made daily in the Truths of the Goſpel. Theſe are Mines we can never dig to the bottom of. They are likewiſe Seeds which do not bring forth Fruit in any heart where they have not taken deep Root.

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Chri-

Christian Thoughts

FOR

Every Day

OF THE

MONTH.

The First Day.

Of Faith.

I. ALL that the Gospel teacheth us is founded on the Authority of the word of God. The Church has

learnt from the mouth of Jesus Christ that which it proposeth to believers as the Object of their Faith; one cannot Err, when truth it self is our guide. There is nothing more reasonable, than to subject our reason to Faith.

2. Of what use is Faith to a Christian, if it serve not for a rule of his manners; It is a great folly to question the Truth of that Doctrin which God has Revealed, and such numbers of Martyrs have signed with their Blood, which has been Confirmed by so many Miracles which the Devils themselves in so many

many encounters have confeſſed; But it is a far greater folly to believe this Doctrin true, and yet to live ſo, as if there were no queſtion but 'twere falſe. Not to live conformable to one's belief, is to believe as Devils do.

3. Faith then ſhall hereafter be the Principle of my actions and the Rule of my life. What ever it condemns, that I abſolutely condemn in deſpight of all the Reluctancies of Nature. I will on all occaſions Confront the Maxims of the World with thoſe of the Goſpel. What ſays the World? That we ought to follow our incli-

tions, that we ought not to suffer any thing, *&c.*

What says Jesus Christ? The quite contrary. Who is in the Right? Jesus Christ or the World.

Application.

Render thanks to God that you are in his true Church, and recite your Creed Deliberatly, as if you were to make a Solemn Profession of your Faith.

Sentences.

Adauge nobis Fidem. Luc. c. 17.

Lord increase our Faith.

Quid prodest si quis Catholice credat, & Gentiliter vivat? Petr. Dam.

What

What avails it to believe like a Christian, and live like a Pagan.

The Second Day.

Of the End of Man.

1. GOD is our last end, he could not Create us but for himself. Our Lord has told us, that we are not made but for God; And we cannot give him the lie, but by betraying our selves.

2. Every one ought to have that which belongs to him. Let us therefore be Gods, since we belong to God. If we are not willing-

ly his, as his Children, we ſhall in deſpight of us be his as his ſlaves. We muſt unavoidably live under the Empire of his goodneſs, or under the Empire of his Juſtice. Which will ye chooſe.

3. Every thing ought to tend towards its end, and to act according to its nature. If the Sun which was made to give light, ſhould refuſe its light to men, it would be as if it were not at all, or rather it would look *monſtrous* in the World. So is there nothing more uſeleſs, or more monſtrous, than a Soul, which being made for God, does not give up it ſelf at all

to

to God. But do I behave my ſelf as becomes a Creature which was made only for God? Are all my thoughts, and all my actions devoted to him? Ah how little do I do which I can truly ſay is done for God. What do we do upon Earth, if we neglect that only affair, for the ſake of which we live here?

Application,

Take up a Reſolution to ſeek God only, and to withold nothing from him that belongs to him.

Sentences.

Dominus meus & Deus meus Joan. c. 20.

Ah thou art my Lord and my God!

Totum te exigit, qui totum te fecit. S, Auguſts.

He expects you ſhould be wholly his, who made you wholly all that you are.

The Third Day.

Of Contempt of the World.

I. THen when man gives himſelf up to the World, he Ceaſeth to be in any meaſure a Chriſtian. This prophane World, ſo paſſionatly fond of greatneſs of pleaſure, of every thing that flatters our ſelf-love, is the Capital Enemy of Jeſus Chriſt

Chriſt, their Maxims, their Commands, their Intereſts, are directly contrary; we cannot therefore poſſibly ſerve both together, we muſt break off, with the one, or other.

2. We cannot ſide with the World, but we muſt violate the vows of our Baptiſm. In renouncing the Devil and the Pomps of this World, we have engaged our ſelves by a ſolemn Oath, to trample under foot all that which the People of the World eſteem; What Perfidiouſneſs! What Sacrilege is it! after all this to become an Idolater of vanity, and to prefer the things

of

of this world before thoſe of Heaven.

3. The World has nothing in it worthy the love of an immortal Soul. It has nothing wherewithal to reward thoſe who ſerve it. Its Treaſures, its Recreations, its Honours, may indeed ingage and incumber the mind of man, but they can never ſatisfie or fill it: To ſpeak truth, theſe are but deceitful poſſeſſions, illuſions and dreams; Or rather they are real evils, they contribute to make man wicked, and cannot prevent his being miſerable. The moſt dazling fortune is not only empty, uncer-

uncertain, and ſhort; but alſo burdenſom, full of troubles, and diſſatisfaction; men ſigh and ſuffer on a Throne, as well as in Chains and Fetters.

Application.

Beg of our Saviour, that he will deſtroy in you the ſpirit of the World, and give you Power to deſpile the Pomps and Vanities of the Age, and all worldly greatneſs.

Sentences.

Quod hominibus altum eſt, abominatio eſt ante Deum. Luc. 16.

For that which is highly eſteemed amongſt men, is abomination in the Sight of God.

Væ

Væ his qui hæſerint tranſeuntibus, quoniam ſimul tranſent S. Aug.

Wo be to thoſe who dote upon periſhing things, for they ſhall periſh with 'em.

The Fourth DAY.

Of Death.

I. A Chriſtian hath great reaſon to fear death, if he doth not live as becomes a Chriſtian. What a ſtrange account has he to make after a worldly and ſenſual life! What regret and vexation muſt it create him, that he has loſt all opportunities of his Salvation! To die an ene-

my

my to God, O dreadful Death! O Melancholy Moment, that ends the pleaſure of Time, and begins the pains of Eternity!

2. What is it which we would wiſh we had done when we are at the point of Death? Let us do now that which we then ſhall wiſh we had done. We have no time to loſe: Every moment may be the laſt of our life. The longer we have liv'd, the nearer are we to our grave: The more we have deferr'd and put off death, the nearer it approaches.

3. What opinion ſhall I then have of worldly things, when

when Iam juſt going to quit 'em? Let us in the midſt of life take counſel of Death; it is a faithful counſellor and will not deceive us. How will this Gold, this Pleaſure, this Beauty look? What ſhall we think of them at the hour of Death? In life, ſhews and apearances of things deceive us, in death we ſee 'em juſt as they are. The living man prizes the world, the dying man contemns it; whom ſhall we believe the living, or the dying man? Ah! what a Trifle will the Word appear to us by the light of the Torch that will conduct us to the Bed of death! But alas

alas there will be no longer time to deceive our ſelves.

Application.

Think upon that thing which you would moſt Fear, if you were to die this inſtant, and with ſpeed take care to ſecure your ſelves againſt that. Accuſtom your ſelf to do every action of the Day, as if you were to die juſt after you have done it: Above all obſerve this rule in the uſe of the Sacrament.

Sentences.

Uno tantum gradu ego morſque dividimur. 1 Reg. I am it may be but a ſtep from Death.

Chriſtiano Chraſtinum non eſt. Tertul.

The Chriſtian lives to day, as if he ſhould ne're ſee to morrow.

The Fifth DAY.

Of the laſt Judgment.

I. I Muſt one day appear before the Tribunal of Jeſus Chriſt, that I may there be judged according to the good or evil, I have done. There is nothing more ſolemn, or more particularly revealed in the whole Goſpel than this truth: I do as firmly believe it as if the laſt Trumpet had already blown, to awaken the Dead.

2. What ſhall we be able

to

to ſay, at the ſight of ſo many evil Thoughts, of ſo many wicked Actions, of ſo many Graces ſlighted and deſpiſed? O terrible day! The day of the wrath of God! Wherein every thing ſhall be diſcover'd and laid open, even to the moſt retir'd thought and motion of the heart; wherein every thing ſhall be accounted for, even to the leaſt Scrupie, even to every moment of time, to every ſigh and deſire, and this without any abatement for any thing! The juſt ſhall ſcarcely be found juſt; what will become of the ſinner and ungodly?

3. What

3. What Sentence muſt the impenitent ſinner then expect, from an inexorable God? O dreadful ſentence; *Go ye Curſed, &c.* Ah whither ſhall they go Lord, thoſe wretched Creatures, whom thou doſt pronounce accurſed? What part of the World muſt they retire to, who muſt be gone far out of thy preſence? where can be the place of ſo diſmal an abode? To be baniſhed from the preſence of God; to be accurſed of God, O dreadful portion:

Application.

Fancy your ſelf before the Tribunal of Jeſus Chriſt. What is

is it that you would then be moſt aſhamed of ? Think now on that, and remember that the moſt ſecret ſins will then be made publick and manifeſt in the day of Judgment, if they be not effaced by repentance.

Sentences.

Ante faciem indignationis ejus quis ſtabit ? Nah. 1.

Lord who can ſtand before thee when thou art angry ?

Væ etiam laudabili vitæ hominum, ſi remota miſericordia diſcutias eam ! S. Aug.

Wo were it to the moſt unblameable life, if thou O God, laying aſide all mercy ſhouldſt

ſhouldeſt ſift and judge it rigorouſly!

The Sixth DAY.

Of Hell.

1. WHAT a horrour ſhould we have of Hell, if we could hear the lamentable ſcreeching of the Damned! They ſigh, they groan, they houl like ſavage beaſts in the midſt of flames; They accuſe themſelves of their ſins, they bewail them, they deteſt them, but 'tis too too late. Their Tears ſerve but to make thoſe fires more fierce in which they ever burn

burn, but never consume. Ah how severe, and yet how vain and fruitless is the Repentance of the damn'd!

2. Never to see God; to burn in fire of which ours is but a faint shaddow: To endure all sorts of evils at the same time, without any comfort, without abatement or intermission: To have Devils and Furies always in our sight, and Rage and Despair always in our hearts: Ah wretched life!

3. It fills these wretched souls with rage, to think that they have had so many opportunities of salvation, and that they have neglected 'em

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'em. The remembrance of their paſt pleaſures is one of their moſt ſenſible Torments. But nothing torments 'em more, than that they cannot loſe the memory of that God, whom they have loſt for ever through their own default.

Application.

Go down in thy imagination into Hell; and there demand of the damn'd what brought them to that diſmal place: from their mouths inform thy ſelf in the nature of their State, and learn of them to fear God, and to know thy own danger.

Sen-

Sentences.

Quis poterit habitare de vobis cum igne devorante? Isaiæ. 33.

Which of you (ſoft ſenſual ſoul's) can dwell in a devouring fire?

De pœna in pœnam tranſeunt, de ardore cupiditatis in flammas Gehennarum. S. Aug.

The wicked are removed from pain to pain, from the Fevers of Luſts to the flaines of Hell.

The Seventh DAY.

Of the Eternity of Hell pains.

WHat can the wrath of God do more than

than punish pleasures which dure so short a moment, with pains that know no end? To be miserable as long as God shall continue God, what unconceivable misery is this? Is it not enough, that the miseries of the Damn'd are the most exquisite and unspeakable, but must they be eternal too? The prick of a pin is a slight pain; but if it were to be Eternal, it would be unsupportable: What then will Flames &c.

2. O Eternity! When a Damn'd creature shedding but one drop each age, shall have wept tears enough to make up all the Rivers and

Brooks

Brooks and Seas that are in the World; he ſhall have advanced no nearer towards an end of his ſufferings after ſo many Millions of Years than if he had begun juſt now to ſuffer. He muſt begin his ſufferings all a-new, as if before he had ſuffered nothing; and when he ſhall have begun again as often, as there are Sands upon the Sea ſhore, Atomes in the Air, and Leaves in Woods and Forreſts, all this at laſt muſt be counted for nothing.

3. The Damn'd are not only to ſuffer during all Eternity, but what's more dreadful ſtill, they ſuffer the evils of

an entire Eternity in every moment. Eternity is always preſent to them; Eternity mixeth it ſelf with all their ſufferings; they have it always in their thoughts, that theſe their pains will never have an end. O cruel thoughts! O miſerable State! to burn all Eternity, to weep all Eternity, to rage with pain all Eternity! Ah that we could entertain ſuch thoughts of theſe things as the damn'd do!

Application.

Exert an act of Faith, concerning the Duration of thoſe pains with which God puniſheth a wilful ſin. We muſt at leaſt believe

lieve this, tho we cannot com-prehend it. 'Tis a ſtrange mis-fortune for a Chriſtian, not to be convinced of a wretched Eternity, but by his own ſad, ſad Experience.

Sentences.

Qui non obediunt Evangelio, pœnas dabunt in Inferno ſempiternas, 2. *Theſ.* 1.

All they who obey not the Goſpel of Chriſt ſhall ſuffer Eternal pain.

Momentaneum quod delectat æternum quod cruciat. S. Chriſ.

The pleaſure of ſin is for a moment, the puniſhment for ever.

The Eight DAY.

Of Paradiſe.

I. PARADISE! O glorious word; a word

that Comprehends in it an utter abſence of every thing that's evil, the enjoyment of all that's good collected and united together: The perfection of the glory and magnificence of God; The purchaſe of the blood of Chriſt; The Conſummation of all the deſires of the heart of Man, and ſomething beyond all this.

2. To ſee God diſtinctly and clearly, and ſuch as he is in his glory, to love God without meaſure; to poſſeſs God without the leaſt fear of ever loſing him; To be happy with the happineſs of God himſelf: Theſe are the glo-

glorious objects of my hopes. Ah! I have but three or four days to paſs in this exile, in this Pilgrimage, and then I ſhall be with him whom my ſoul loveth.

3. What matters it where we dwell here below, provided we dwell with Jeſus, with Angels and glorified Spirits to all Eternity? Have I any reaſon to complain that eternal Happineſs coſt me a little trouble? The Martyrs purchaſed Heaven at the price of their Blood, and yet looked on't, as given 'em for nought. Oh bleſſed Eternity! did men but know thy value.

Application.

Stir up in thy self an earnest desire of beholding God, and whilst thou considerest Heaven, look down with Scorn on Earth. Were thy Soul fill'd with the thoughts of Paradise, thou wouldest neither admire nor fear any thing in this World.

Sentences.

Satiabor cum apparuerit gloria tua, Psa. 17.

My Soul can never be satisfied till I behold God in his Glory.

Si labor terret, merces invitet. St. Bern.

Let not the pains discourage us where so glorious a reward inviteth us.

The

The Ninth DAY.

Of the preſence of God.

1. GOd beholdeth me as if there were none but me in the World, or rather he is within me like an eye infinitely clear, whoſe ſight nothing can eſcape: He beholdeth me with the ſame look with which he comprehendeth himſelf; and with ſuch an attent application of mind, as if in the mean time he forbore to contemplate himſelf that he might the better ſtudy me and ſearch me to the Bottom.

2. It is a thouſand times more ſhameful for me that my ſins are open to the ſight of God, than if they were expoſed to the view of the whole World. And yet we often would not do that before the meaneſt ſervant, which we dare do in the preſence of the King of Kings: What blindneſs is it to fear the ſight of man ſo much, and fear the ſight of God ſo little

3. All the ſhades of night are not thick enough to conceal us from him who is light it ſelf. The moſt deſert and loanſome retirements are fill'd with the Majeſty of God: We may eaſily indeed ſhun

the

the company or ſight of men, but we cannot but meet God every where.

Application.

Place your ſelf in the preſence of God and conſider whether there be any thing in you which offendeth his Eyes. Endeavour to accuſtom your ſelf to the Practiſe of this Doctrine of the preſence of God; This is an effectual remedy againſt ſin, *God ſees me*; there need no more to reſtrain us in the heat of the moſt violent paſſion.

Sentences.

Omnia nuda & aperta ſunt oculis ejus, Heb. 4.

All things are naked and bare to the eyes of that God,

with whom we have to do.

Si peccare vis, quære ubi non te videat Deus, & fac quod vis. S. Aug.

If thou wilt sin, go where God cannot see thee, and then do what thou wilt.

The Tenth DAY.

Of the Care of our Salvation.

I. THE business of Salvation is properly the business of Man: All other things may be reckon'd for nothing. The enterprises of Princes, The Intrigues of Courts, Wars, Negotiations, &c. These are meer amuzements

muzements and Childiſh trifles. The important and only buſineſs of Man, is to ſerve God and ſave himſelf. In this conſiſts all the good, all the perfection, all the happineſs of Man. He is no longer to be accounted rational, no longer to be accounted Man; who neglects an affair, whoſe conſequences are ſo important, whoſe ſucceſs is ſo uncertain, whoſe loſs is ſo irreparable. What blindneſs, what folly is it, to take ſuch care how to live, and to take none how to live well? To be ſo intent upon our fortune, and ſo unconcern'd for our ſalvation? What can it pro-

profit a Man to gain the whole World and loſe himſelf?

2. The Creatures are not made but for our Salvation, and therefore become uſeleſs, when we do not make uſe of 'em to this end. So that, when man forbears to labour after his Salvation, the Sun ſhall ceaſe to ſhine, the Heavens ſhould ceaſe to move, the Earth ſhould no longer bring forth fruit for Man: The Angels ſhould abandon him; or rather he himſelf ſhould fall back into nothing: He is unworthy of life when he lives not to God.

3. Ne-

3. Nevertheleſs the greater part of mankind think of nothing leſs, than how to ſave themſelves: They take care of every thing, but their Salvation. We are willing to improve every thing; our Money muſt be put out to Intereſt; our Fields muſt be tilled and manured; the Revenues of our eſtates muſt be advanced. We bewail every loſs, but that which is without retrieve. We are at great expences for the Body, but we do nothing for the Soul. One would think by our manner of life, that our Soul did not at all belong to us. That it were the Soul of one

of

of our moſt mortal Enemies, that it were the Soul of a beaſt; or rather one would think we had no Soul at all, or that we had it only to deſtroy it.

Application.

Reſolve to ſave your ſelf what e're it coſt you, and take up the Sentiment of Pope *Benedict* XII. who when a Prince requeſted of him ſomething that was un'uſt: If (ſaid he) I had two ſouls, I would hazard one for this Prince, but having but one, I cannot be content to loſe it.

Sentences.

Porro unum eſt neceſſarium. Luc. 10.

Aſ-

After all there is but one thing neceſſary.

Ubi ſalutis Damnum eſt, illic utiq; jam lucrum nullum eſt. S. Euch.

What advantage can we dream of, where Salvation it ſelf is loſt? He looſeth all, who loſeth his Soul.

The Eleventh DAY.

Of the Horror of Sin.

I. WHAT a loſs is the loſs of a God! Men think themſelves miſerable, when they loſe their Goods by a Decree of Law,

Law, or any other Accident. What is it then to loſe an infinite good? Wretched is the Soul which loſeth its God by a ſin; But more wretched is that Soul which counteth the loſs of a God for nothing.

2. O Sin! How common art thou among Men and yet O how unknown! How little underſtood by 'em! In our playing and diverting our ſelves, to render our ſelves the objects of the Curſe of God, what fatal ſport, what diſmal diverſion is this? God who is nothing but love, does infinitely hate the Sinner. To hate a little, is to wiſh us a little evil; to hate to death,

death, is to wiſh us death: But to hate infinitely, this is that which cannot be conceived. What do we fear if we fear not this dreadful hatred of God?

3. The ſpectacle of *Calvary* is a terrible ſpactacle, and yet the ſight of a ſoul bereaved of grace is a more dreadful ſpectaele, than that of a God dying in Groans. Jeſus died not, but to deſtroy ſin. Sin raiſed more horrour in him, than death it ſelf.

Application.

Imprint in thy mind an unfeigned ſorrow for ſin. Of all thy loſſes weep for none, but for that of grace,

grace. for none but this can be repaired by tears.

Sentences.

Quem fructum habuiſtis in illis, in quibus nunc erubeſcetis? Rom. 6.

What fruit had you then in thoſe things whereof you are now aſhamed; for the end of thoſe things is death?

Væ animæ audaci quæ ſperavit, ſi à te receſſiſſet, ſe aliquid melius habituram: S. Aug.

Wo be to that ſenſleſs ſoul, which while it abandoneth thee, O God, dreameth to find ſomething better.

The

The Twelfth DAY.

Of Repentance.

I. REPENT and believe the Goſpel, ſaith our Saviour, He joyneth theſe two things together, to teach us that the Auſterities of repentance are not to be ſeparated from the Profeſſion of Chriſtianity. He was during his mortal life an example of repentance, being wholly taken up in expiating our Sins, and appeaſing the Juſtice of God: We ought after his example to practiſe a Conſtant Repentance.

tance if the Moſt-holy Jeſus faſted, and wept, &c. What ought vicious and wicked men to do?

Sin muſt unavoidably be puniſhed either by him who has committed it, or by him againſt whom it is Committed. If ſinners do not correct themſelves here in time, Divine Juſtice will correct them through all Eternity. Thoſe crimes which are not blotted out by the waters of Repentance, muſt be puniſhed by the Flames of Hell: Is it not eaſier to weep a few days, than burn Eternally?

To reconcile us to God, 'tis

'tis not enough to proſtrate our ſelves at the feet of a Confeſſor, to cover our heads with Aſhes, and our whole Bodies with Sack-cloath. If we have not a ſincere ſorrow for our Sins: If we do not from our hearts renounce our criminal dotage, our unjuſt gain, &c. we are Impoſtors, not Penitents, Prayers, Alms, Faſting and all Mortifications of the Body whatever are Extrinſick to Chriſtian Repentance; hatred of Sin is the very Eſſence and Spirit of it.

Application.

Beg pardon of God that you have led a life hitherto ſo repugnant to his Goſpel: And at the ſame time implore his Grace, that you may be able to live like the Primitive Chriſtians, in the Conſtant Practiſe of an auſtere Repentance.

Sentences.

Niſi pœnitentiam egeritis, omnes ſimiliter peribitis. Luc. 13.

Unleſs ye Repent ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh.

Pœnitentibus dico, quid prodeſt quia humiliamini ſi non mutamini, S. Aug.

Penitents muſt learn this leſſon, it availeth little to be

be humbled, if you be not changed.

The Thirteenth DAY.

Againſt delaying our Converſion.

I. I Do delay too long, to give my ſelf up to God; it looketh as if I endeavoured to eſcape his hands.

Is it then an evil to be his? Is it any ſhame to put an end to a ſhameful courſe of life? Can one love too ſoon a beauty infinitely lovely: To morrow, to morrow; Why not to day; Why not

not from this very moment? Will my Chains be more eaſie to be broke to morrow? Will my heart be more ſoft? No, Certainly; time which weakeneth all things elſe, hardneth and ſtrengthneth ſinful habits; by delaying our remedies, we tender our Diſeaſes incurable.

2. What is it that hindereth us from following that voice which calleth us to repentance; What is it that frighteth us; There's trouble and difficulty (you'l ſay) in Changing the courſe of one's Life: I grant it. But what ought not a Chriſtian to undergo who adoreth a Cru-

Crucified God, and expecteth a Paradiſe! If there be any thing that we ought to fear, 'tis that abuſe of God's grace which we are guilty of.

3. To delay! Is time to come to my diſpoſal; Is it a Fund that I am maſter of; God waiteth for me 'tis true the Scripture ſaith ſo: But the Scripture doth not tell me how long I have yet to live. He who hath promiſed pardon to the penitent, hath never promiſed a morrow to the Sinner. It may be I may have time, but it may be I may not. Muſt not a man have loſt all his Senſe,

That will hazard all the hopes of his Salvation upon, and *It may be.*

Application.

Reflect upon the time, that you have deferred to give your self up to God: and tremble to think of the danger in which you are.

Sentences.

Dixi nunc Cœpi. Psal. 119.

I made haſt and delay'd not to keep thy Commandments.

Nulla ſatis magna Securitas ubi periclitattur Æternitas. S. Greg.

A man can never be too wary when Eternity is at Stake.

The

The Fourteenth DAY.

Of the Opinion of Men concerning us.

1. THe World talketh: Let it talk; ſhall the talk of fools hinder you from being wiſe; But what will they ſay; They'l ſay you fear God more than the world, The vileſt Libertine will eſteem you in their heart, and will tell themſelves, that you are in the Right, after all, what importeth it, what they ſay of you, ſo you do your duty, and God approve it.

2. What Wretchedneſs is it to be aſhamed of the Goſpel! Men look upon't an honour to wear the livery of a Prince, and yet are aſham'd to wear that of Jeſus Chriſt. The meaneſt Atizans make an open Profeſſion of their trade in the World; and yet Chriſtians dare not own themſelves Chriſtians in the Church. The Son of God will be aſhamed before his Father of that Chriſtian which hath been aſhamed of him before Men.

3. Ah! The adorable Jeſus, is there any thing in him to be aſhamed of; Is his Name infamous? Is it a reproach

proach to follow his Maxims, his Examples? Thou art not aſham'd to be wanton or a Blaſphemer; nay more, thou glorieſt in it; And art thou aſham'd to be a good Man? Notwithſtanding, let Men talk what they will, he is the worthieſt and moſt honourable Man in the World, who ſerves God the moſt faithfully; and who makes the moſt Eminent profeſſion of ſerving him.

Application.

Ask thy ſelf, whether this Fantom the Opinion of the World, does not a little fright thee; and keep thee from diſcharging thoſe obli-

ligations which you owe to the Profession of Christianity.

Sentences.

Non erubesco Evangelium. Rom. 1.

I am not asham'd of the Gospel of Christ.

Quid times fronti tuæ, quam Signo Crucis armasti?

Let not him who marches under the Ensign of the Cross, fear the reproaches of the World.

The Fifteenth DAY.

Of distrust of our selves.

1. THere is nothing a man hath so much reason to fear as himself. His own

own weakneſs ſhould make him tremble more than all the power of Hell. There needs but one word, one ſigh, one look, one ſmile to conquer him. *Adam* fell; *Solomon* forſook God; St. *Peter* denied Jeſus Chriſt. What can be expected from ſlender twiggs, when the leaſt blaſt doth ore-turn Cedars.

2. Man is generally conquer'd without being aſſaulted; our Paſſions, our Senſes conſpire againſt us every moment: Our own heart is our moſt dangerous Enemy. Thoſe whom Perſecutions have not been able to o're-throw, have fallen of them-

ſelves in the Deſert: After they vanquiſhed Tyrants and Devils, they have themſelves been vanquiſhed by their own luſts. Beware you be not too indulgent, too eaſie to your ſelf.

3. The greateſt of Saints have trembl'd at the thoughts of the State of their Soul before God, Anchorets and Penitents have been heard to ſigh at the hour of Death, under the Apprehenſion of the dreadful Sentence of Divine Juſtice, neither knowing what they at preſent were, nor what they ſhould be hereafter. 'Tis but a moment, and one preſuming himſelf

himſelf a Saint does prove a Reprobate.

Application.

Say with *St. Philip de Nery, Lord, beware of me to day, for I ſhall betray thee, if thou leave me to my ſelf.* Foreſee Temptations and remember thoſe are the moſt dangerous, where you fancy there is leaſt to fear.

Sentences.

Qui ſe exiſtimat ſtare, videat ne cadat. 1 *Cor.* 10.

Let him that ſtandeth take heed leſt he falls.

Quamvis ſis in tuto neli eſſe ſecurus. S. Ber.

Though you be ſafe, be not ſecure.

The Sixteenth DAY.

Of making use of Grace.

1. THere is not the least Grace which Christ hath not purchas'd for us at the expence of his Blood, and which he has not beg'd of the Father, that moment when he gave up his Soul upon the Gross. Therefore to slight one good Thought sent us from above, to suppress a motion of Gods Spirit exciting us to Vertue, is to trample under foot the Blood of Christ, and frustrate the Design of his Death.

2. We

2. We are accomptable to God, not only for thoſe Graces we have received, but alſo for thoſe which he deſign'd to beſtow upon us, if we had not prevented him. The Sun ſhines and we ſhut our windows; we are nothing the leſs obliged to it for its light: 'Tis our own fault that we make no uſe on't.

'Tis, it may be, more than above theſe twenty years, that God has inſpired you with Deſires, which you have never yet had the Courage to put in execution. To be ſo long in the School of the Holy Spirit, and learn nothing! To be ſo often ſoli-

ci-

cited, reproved, threatned, and do nothing! Let's remember that God is a Creditor, but such a one as cannot be eluded by breaking in his Debt, and that if he does not speedily compel us to pay our Debt he will at last require it with Interest, which will be great; And in fine that there is a certain measure of Graces, and of Sins, after which God withdraweth himself.

Application.

Give thanks to the Holy Spirit for all those Graces which he has given you; Beg pardon of him that you have not been always faithful to his trust; hearken to his voice at present, and fear, least if you obey not his Commands you

you be in the end utterly forſaken by him.

Sentences.

Cui multum datum eſt, multum quæretur ab eo. Luc. 12.

To whomſoever much is given, of him ſhall much be required,

Gratiam ſequitur Judiciam S. Baſil.

The day of judgment followeth the day of Grace.

The Seventeenth DAY.

Of making uſe of Time.

I. THe loſs of time, is one of the greateſt Diſorders in the World. This Life

Life so short, every moment of it so precious, and yet that we should live, as if it were never to have an end, or that we had nothing to do in it.

2. Alas! had one of the Damn'd but one moment of all that time which I waste away how would he use it? In every moment of my life I might gain a blessed Eternity. We let pass no opportunity of diverting, or of enriching our selves; and yet we lose every hour and opportunity of saving our selves.

3. The day best imployed is not that, wherein you have most advanced your worldly Interest, but that wherein you have

have laid up moſt Treaſure for the time to come; and wherein you have moſt pleaſed God. Paſs your time ſo, that whatever hour any man ſhould ask you, What are ye doing? you may be able to anſwer, I am labouring for my God and for my Soul.

Application.

Renew frequently thoſe Reſolutions, you have taken up of ſerving God faithfully; and fix it throughly in your mind, that whatever time you do not imploy in the ſervice of God, is time miſpent and loſt.

Sen-

Sentences.

Nemini dedit spatium peccandi Eccl. 15.

God never gave man time to sin.

Vacat tibi ut Philosophus sis, non vacat ut Christianus sis. S Paulin.

You are at leisure for vain Amusements, yet have no time to be a Christian.

The

The Eighteenth DAY.

Of the Lords Supper.

1. THIS Sacrament is the Channel through which the Blood and Merits of Jeſus Chriſt are convey'd, it is the Spring of thoſe Graces which are moſt neceſſary to our Salvation. When we abuſe it we bereave our ſelves of all the Benefits of the Death of Chriſt, and render our Salvation impoſſible.

2. To abuſe the Sacrament, is to prevent the effect of it by our evil Diſpo-

poſition and Unfitneſs when we approach it. What reaſon have we to fear, ſo many pretended Examinations of our ſelves, and Confeſſions of our faults, and yet no Amendment; To eat ſo often this heavenly Viand, and yet ſtill lead a ſenſual Life! A Chriſtian formerly who had but once worthily participated of this Sacriment had ſtrength enough to ſuffer Martyrdom. What do you find like this in you?

3. That which ſhould make us tremble is this, That whenever we receive the Body and Blood of Chriſt

Chriſt without an unfeign'd Sorrow for our Sins, we eat and drink Damnation to our ſelves according to St. *Paul.* What muſt then become of us when we make Reparation for the Blood of Chriſt, ſo often prophaned by us in ſo many unworthy and ſacrilegious Communions.

4. But tho the danger of Communicating unworthily be great, the danger of not Communicating at all is not little. The one is a ſacrilegious Invaſion of this Holy Sacrament, the other is a ſtupid Neglect or wretched Contempt of it; that ever ſin-

ſinful Man ſhould deſpiſe the Blood and Merits which ſhould expiate his Sins! That ever frail Man ſhould neglect that Grace, which ſhould ſupport and ſtrengthen him! How frivolous here are all Excuſes? He that pretendeth Buſineſs, declares that he hath Buſineſs upon his hands more neceſſary than that of Salvation, and whereever Buſineſs doth not, nothing but ſome Sin can keep Men off from the Communion; they are unfit to Communicate, and ſeem to reſolve they will continue ſo. Ah! How is he fit to die, who is not fit to Communi-

municate? How can he be deliver'd from the wrath to come by the Blood and Merits of Christ, who owneth himself uncapable of being Partaker of them.

Application.

Consider frequently your own Obligations and Necessities, and the blessed Advantages of this Holy Communion, and come often to it, that your Joy and Peace may be full and stedfast; That your Weakness may be supported, and your Resolutions confirmed. Consider what are the Defects of your Preparation, of your Examinations and Confessions, and endeavour to approach the Table with that holy

Dis-

Disposition of Soul as if you were to dye immediately after you had received.

Sentences.

Probet seipsum homo. 1 Cor. 11.

Let a man examin himself and so let him eat, *&c.*

Sunt Christiani mali qui vocantur fideles, & non sunt; in quibus Sacramenta Christi patiuntur injuriam. S. Aug.

There are evil Christians who are called believers, but are not; such are all those who slight or prophane the Sacraments of Christ.

The

The Nineteenth DAY.

Of Alms.

I. HOw are we obliged to Jeſus Chriſt, that he hath given us an Opportunity of being charitable to him by ſubſtituting the Poor in his place. He is in the Euchariſt to enkindle our affection and to nouriſh the Souls of the Faithful. He is in the Poor to attract our Compaſſion, and to be nouriſhed by the Faithful. Happy is the man that giveth an Alms to Jeſus Chriſt, but unhappy he, who doth refuſe him:

him: You give your Dogs Food to eat, and you ſuffer Jeſus Chriſt to die for Want; What Injuſtice and Barbarity is this?

2. That which we give to the Rich and Great, is generally loſt; that which we give to God is never loſt: He returneth all with Intereſt, he repayeth all bountifully, even to a Glaſs of Water. Play, Riot and Debauchery have ruined thouſands of Families, but Alms never impoveriſhed one. The moſt ſucceſsful Art of heaping up Wealth, is, to ſpend it bountifully upon the Poor.

3. Men

3. Men at the laſt day ſhall be judged by their Alms; what Account will they give of the Expence of ſo much Wealth then, when the Poor ſhall accuſe 'em? Then when Jeſus Chriſt himſelf ſhall upbraid them with their hard heartedneſs. *Go ye curſed into everlaſting fire: I was hungry, and you gave me no meat, I was naked and you clothed me not,* &c. A Heart that is heardned towards the Poor, is the Heart of a Reprobate: on the contrary, a Soul truly charitable, is a Soul predeſtinated to to Life. What can our Judge ſay againſt us, when he

shall see our Garments upon him, and our Bread and Money in his hands? We need not fear any thing at the Judgment-seat of Christ if we have the Poor for our Advocates.

Application.

Consider how you behave your self towards the Poor, whether you treat them as the Members of Christ; whether you do them all those good Offices you are obliged to do?

Sentences.

Fœneratur Domino qui miseretur pauperis. Prov. 19.

He

He that hath Mercy on the Poor, lendeth unto the Lord.

Date omnibus, ne cui non dederitis, ipſe ſit Chriſtus. S. Aug.

Give Alms to every one that asketh, leaſt he whom ye deny ſhould be Chriſt himſelf in perſon.

The Twentieth DAY.

Of Example.

I. EVil Examples have deſtroyed many more than the good Examples of the holieſt men have ever

been able to ſave. If one could open Hell, ſcarcely could one find one there, who might not ſay, Such or ſuch a one hath damned me. What ſtrange account have we to give! God Commandeth us to love our Enemies: We ruine the Souls of thoſe who do us no harm. That man who hath been ſo unfortunate, as to deſtroy, by his Example, thoſe Souls Chriſt purchaſed by his Blood hath reaſon much to doubt his own Salvation. What can we hope for from Chriſt, who have robbed him of that which coſt him ſo dear?

2. O you cruel Parents who lead unchriſtian Lives! Well had it been for your Children, that they had never had a being, rather than have been born of you; you have been the Authors of their Lives only to be the Authors of their Death, Eternal Death; when they ſhall demand their Paradiſe of you at the day of Judgment what will you be able to anſwer them?

3. Let us put on Chriſt Jeſus, according to the Commands of *S. Paul*; that men obſerving in us his Spirit, his Behaviour, his Vertues, may

be put in mind of him. We contribute no leſs to the Salvation of our Brethren by an Exemplary Life, than we do to their Deſtruction by a ſcandalous one.

Application.

Take care that you do nothing that may ſcandalize or tempt your Neighbour, and beg Pardon of God for thoſe ſins of others, which you have been the occaſion of. Are not our own Crimes too too many that owe draw upon our ſelves the guilt of others?

Sentences.

Væ homini per quem ſcandalum

dalum venit. Matth. 18.

Woe to the man by whom Offences come.

Pro tantis reus quantos ſecum traxerit in reatum. Salvian.

We are guilty of all that thoſe commit, whom we have betrayed into ſin by our Example.

The Twenty firſt DAY.

Of Sufferings.

I. WE are not therefore Chriſtians that we may be Rich, and live in Pleaſure; there is no need

of Chriſtianity for this : The World rather ſhould have been left in the ſtate it was, under the Dominion of Phancy and Paſſion. The Chriſtian life is a crucified life. We muſt either love the Croſs, or renounce our Faith.

2. What ſaith the Goſpel ? *Bleſſed are they that mourn. Wo be to you Rich, who have your Conſolation in this World.* Mark the Language, of the Holy Spirit. One would think at preſent it were a barbarous Language, and no where underſtood, unleſs in *Canada*, and *Japan*, where Believers, run to Martyrdom, we

we ſhould blot out this Article of Sufferings out of the Goſpel of *Europe*. Do we believe that Happineſs conſiſteth in Tears, and that the Rich are unhappy? And yet this is an Article of Faith, no leſs neceſſary to Salvation, than that of the Trinity, Incarnation, *&c.*

3. it becomes the Son of God to dye upon the Croſs that he might take Poſſeſſion of his Glory! All the Saints never entred into Heaven, but by the way of Sufferings; and can we hope, that that which coſt the Son and Saints of God ſo much ſhould coſt us nothing. The

Croſs is both the Portion and the Mark of the Elect. That Soul which ſuffers nothing, and will ſuffer nothing, hath the Character of a Reprobate; he muſt unavoidably ſuffer, either in this World, or in the other

Application.

Adore Jeſus Chriſt Crucified, and beg of him the Grace to be here made Partaker of his Sufferings, that you may hereafter ſhare in his Glory.

Sentences.

Qui non bajulat Crucem ſuam, non eſt me dignus. Luc. 14.

He

He that taketh not up his Croſs and followeth me, is not worthy of me.

Pudeat ſub ſpinato capite membrum fieri delicatum. S. Bern.

How ill doth a ſoft and delicate Member ſuit with a head crowned with Thorns.

The Twenty ſecond DAY.

Of Conformity to the will of God.

I. THe greateſt Happineſs of a Creature is to will that which his Creator Wills: 'Tis in this one thing, that the whole of true

true Holineſs doth conſiſt: Saints are therefore Saints, becauſe their Wills are conformable to Gods. What ever Vertue you have, if you want this, you are not truly devout.

2. That Soul which is not content with that which God Wills, doth in ſome ſort attempt to uſurp upon the Authority of God. To deſire that things ſhould go otherwiſe than they do in the World, is to deſire, that God ſhould not be Maſter. Whatever befalls us, befalls us by his Order. Is it not reaſonable to conſent to whatever infinite Wiſdom ordains?

3. No-

3. Nothing happens to me by the appointment of God, but 'tis for my good. Should he himſelf take up a Sword to ſlay me, I am ſure his hand would be guided by his heart; and what have I to fear from that heart that loves me? I will therefore Will nothing but what he Wills. I care not to complain of Heat or Cold, of Loſſes or Sickneſs, *&c.* All this Change of Nature and of man, paſſes through the hands of God. That which the World calls bad Weather, Affliction, Diſgrace, is an Advantage, a good Fortune and a Favour of Heaven, when

when we conſider it in the Order and Method of Divine Providence.

Application.

Renounce your own Will, and pray God that his may be always accompliſhed upon you.

Sentences.

Ita pater quia ſic fuit placitum ante te. Matth. 11.

Even ſo Father, for ſo it ſeemed good in thy ſight.

Ille placet Deo, cui placet Deus. S. Aug.

We pleaſe God, when whatever God wills pleaſes us.

The

The Twenty third DAY.

Of Truſt in God.

I. A Man truſts his health with a Phyſitian, his Sute with his Advocate, and his Life, if he be blind, to a Child, and ſometimes to a Dog; and ſhall we make any difficulty to give up our ſelves to the Conduct of God!

2. The Cares of Divine Providence extend themſelves even to Ants and Flies: How can we then doubt it to our Souls created after the Image of God. and purchaſed by

by the Blood of Chriſt? God does free and ſupport Infidels who know him not; he ſhowers down his Benefits upon the wicked who blaſpheme his holy Name. What will he not then do for Chriſtians, who honour, and who love him?

3. Our concerns are much better in his hands, than in our own. Let us leave the matter then to him, he is our Father and our Mother altogether. That tenderneſs which he has for his Children, does oblige him to take care of 'em. He has promiſed us his Protection, he will not be worſe than his

Word

Word. Heaven and Earth ſhall ſooner periſh than God permit a good man to periſh, who puts his truſt in him.

Application.

Examin your own heart, and try whether it has truſt in God. worthy of the Goodneſs of God, and the Merits of Chriſt.

Sentences.

Deus meus es tu, in manibus tuis ſortes meæ. Pſ. 30.

Thou art my God, in thee is my hopes.

Projice te in eum, non ſe ſubtrahat ut cadas. S. Aug.

Commit all your Care to God, he will not deceive you.

The

The Twenty fourth DAY.

Of the Love of God.

1 GOD ſo loves us, that he has given us his only Son; if he had had any thing better, he would have given it us. Is not this to purchaſe our Love, dear enough when he purchaſes it at this Rate; Indifferent Goodneſs has a juſt Title to our love: Why ſhould we not then love infinite Goodneſs? What! ſhall Goodneſs ceaſe to be aimable, becauſe 'tis infinite?

2. God commands me to love

love him: Is this too ſevere a Commandment, to love a Beauty Infinitely lovely? He commands me to love him with all my Heart; Is this little Heart too great a Preſent for ſo great a God? But he that ſays All, doth except nothing. Whatever part I give him, if I do not give him all, I do not give him enough.

3. Of Eternity could have an end, it were not too much in the Judgment of the Devils themſelves, to undergo Hell, to obtain the Grace of loving God. There is not one of the Damn'd, who would not think himſelf happy

py, if after innumerable Ages of Sufferings, he could exert one Act of Love. I can Love God, if I will, without its costing me much trouble: not to do so when one can, is an Evil greater than Hell it self.

Application.

Cast of all Love but that of God, and endeavour with all your might to love him above all things.

Sentences.

Si Charitatem non habuero nihil sum. 1 Cor. 13.

If

If I have not Charity, I am nothing.

Si amare pigebat, redemare non pigeat, S. Aug.

Though we cannot love God firſt, let us at leaſt return his Love.

The Twenty fifth DAY.

Of the Love of our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.

I. NOthing ever coſt ſo dear as a Soul: The Life of God was the price of it. I deſerved Hell: The Devil and all the Creatures demanded the Puniſhment of my Crimes: Jeſus Chriſt heark-

hearken'd to nothing but his own heart, which begged of him my Pardon; he has had Pity of me, and has given the laſt drop of his Blood to redeem me. So that though I were not God my Creator's, yet I ſhould be Chriſt my Redeemers, The leaſt I owe him, is to give him thanks for the good he has done me; though I do not return him Life for Life, I ought at leaſt to return him Love for Love.

2. I give a Dog a Bone that's good for nothing; for this nothing he loves me; he careſſes me, he guards me. Jeſus has given me his Graces

ces, his Blood, his Merits, all his Treaſures, and yet I continue inſenſible. Ungrateful and unnatural Soul! Learn thy Duty of a Beaſt, the Dog's thy Maſter and thy Judge. ſ his Example do not reform thy heart, thou art more bruitiſh than the Beaſts themſelves.

3. We have a heart very tender towards our Friends, very ſenſible of all the good Offices they do us: Muſt Chriſt only be treated with inſenſibleneſs and Ingratitude? Which of our Friends has been crucified for us.

Ap-

Application.

Beg the Love of Christ, of Christ himself, for no body can love him, without his Grace.

Sentences.

Si quis non amat Dominum Jesum Christum sit Anathema. 1 Cor. 16.

If a Man love not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema.

Si totum me debeo pro me facto, quid addam pro Refecto, & Refecto hoc modo? S. Bern.

If I owe my whole self for being Created, What do I owe for being redeem'd, and redeemed in this manner?

The

The Twenty ſixth DAY.

Of Obedience.

I. THERE is no one Duty of a Chriſtian more expreſly enjoyn'd, or more frequently and forcibly inculcated, than Obedience; nor was the Example of our Saviour's Life more illuſtrious and eminent in any one Inſtance of Vertue, than in this. Pretend not therefore to be led by the ſame Spirit unleſs you bring forth the ſame Fruit. Nothing is more repugnant to the Spirit of the Goſpel, than the

Spirit of Contention. The Wisdom that is from above, is first pure, and then peaceable. Impurity makes us Beasts; Disobedience, Devils.

2. Obedience is the Fruit of two of the most perfect and exalted Vertues in the Gospel, Charity and Self-resignation; The former frees us from those Jealousies and Suspicions, the latter, from the Pride and Wilfulness, which hinders our Submission and Complyance with the Commands of our Superiors; on this humble and charitable Soul the Spirit of God rests, in this humble and charitable Soul, the Peace of God dwells.

dwells. Disobedience does indeed generally pretend to a very honourable Parentage, and will be thought the Child of Sincerity and Courage; Vain Pretences of a deluded mind, many vile and corrupt Affections, may mingle themselves with the most plausible opposition to Superiors: But meek suffering is not lyable to Imposture. We must remember too, that he who had heat enough to fight, had not Constance enough to suffer for his Master.

3. Obedience implys more than not to resist our Governours. He that commands

us to love our Enemies, expects sure more from us, than not to hate and injure those whom he has set over us. Where our Governour the Vice-Roy of God opposes not the Government of his and our Lord: There negative Loyalty is like negative Righteousness. We must in all we lawfully may, be zealous for the Honour and Security of the Government: Not to be a Rebel is not all that goes to make up a good Subject.

Application.

Imitate the Meekness, if you would possess the Peace of Christ: Admit

mit of no Pretences to colour Disobedience. For there is not in the World a more flat and monstrous Contradiction, than a contentious or disobedient Christian.

Sentences.

Omnis anima potestatibus supereminentibus subjecta esto. Rom. 13.

Let every Soul be subject to the higher Powers.

Nec dedignandum servo, quod præcessit in Domino. S. Bern.

How well will Obedience become the Servant, since it was so much practised by our great Lord and Master.

The Twenty seventh DAY.

Of the Love of our Neighbour.

1. THAT Soul that loves not its Neighbour, cannot truly say, it loves God. Whatever good Works we do, we do nothing, if we do not love our Brethren. Martyrdom it self is an abomination to God, without Charity.

2. This is my Commandment, saith Christ, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Though Men should have nothing in them ami-

amiable, but this, that they are loved by Jeſus Chriſt. Is not this enough to oblige me to love 'em with all my heart? I ſhould be very nice and proud, if I could not love that which our Saviour loved better than himſelf.

3. Do I love all men, as Jeſus has loved me? that is, ſo as to be ready to give my Eſtate and my Life for them? how rare is this Affection amongſt Chriſtians? And yet this is that of Chriſt Jeſus, and of all true Chriſtians.

Application.

Endeavour to kindle in your ſelf a moſt tender compaſſion for thoſe whom Chriſt has loved ſo

tenderly; and take up a firm resolution, that you'l never do any thing injurious to the love of your Neighbour.

Sentences.

Qui diligit proximum, legem implevit. Rom. 13.

Love is the fulfilling of the Law.

Dilectio sola discernit inter filios Dei & filios Diaboli. S. Aug.

Charity is the distinguishing Character of a Child of God from a Child of the Devil.

The

The Twenty Eighth Day.

Of the Love of our Enemies.

I. CHarity is ſo inſeparable from Chriſtianity, that we are obliged to love even our Enemies; of this Chriſt hath given us both a Precept and Example. Does God command, and we think much to obey? God forgives his Murtherers his Death; and we cannot forgive our Brethren a petty Injury.

2. There is no Forgiveneſs for that Soul, who will not forgive. God will forgive us, as we forgive others. A

Christian that will revenge himself, condemns himself by his own mouth every time he repeats the Lords Prayer. We must either love our Enemies, or hate our selves.

3. One would think, that two Christians, who hate one another, were not of the same Religion; for what probability is there, that those who cannot endure one another, should ever approach the same Holy Table, eat the same Food, expect the same Paradise, and hope to live together in it eternally? It is not permitted us to hate any thing but the Devils, and it belongs only to the Damn'd

to

to hate one another. There is no more manifeſt ſign of Reprobation, than not to forgive an Injury. The Soul that has this Property, is thereby mark'd out for Hell.

Application.

Examin your heart in the preſence of a crucifyed Chriſt; and if you find in it hatred or enmity for any whoſoever, learn Charity and Tenderneſs from the Wounds of Jeſus.

Sentences.

Qui odit fratrem ſuum homicida eſt. 1 John 3.

He that hateth his Brother is a Murtherer.

Vindicari

Vindicari vis Christianus, nondum vindicatus est Christus. S. Aug.

Wilt thou a Christian revenge thy self, when the Death of Christ is not yet revenged.

The Twenty ninth DAY.

Of the Imitation of Christ.

1. THE first Man ruined himself by affecting to be like God. All other Men cannot save themselves but by becoming like the Son of God. He is become our Model, by becoming Man: we ought to become his Images. He is the Head of the Elect: To be a Reprobate, is not to resemble him.

2. We study with much Indu-

Induſtry the Modes and Faſhions of the World: and we do not as much as caſt one glance upon the life of Chriſt. Courtiers conform themſelves to their Prince; Philoſophers have had Diſciples who have imitated them, even to the defects of Nature. Have I ever entertained ſerious Thoughts of imitating the Vertues of the Son of God? What ſhame is it to me, that I have not yet advanced one ſtep to follow him! And what a Reproach is it to him to march before us, and not have one to follow him?

3. What ſhall I ſay in the day of Judgment, when I

ſhall

ſhall be to be compared with my Model or Pattern, when the Life of Jeſus ſhall be ſet againſt mine, his Humility againſt my Pride, his Wounds againſt my Wantonneſſes, his Sweetneſs and Meekneſs againſt my Fury and Paſſions, *&c.* Ah! what a Monſter is a Chriſtian without Chriſtianity? one Baptiſed, and yet a ſlave of the Devil? Uuder the Character of the Croſs, and yet a Confederate of the World and Fleſh, I muſt therefore either renounce my Baptiſm, and my Profeſſion of Chriſtianity, or elſe conform my life to that of my Saviour. Chriſtianity, to define it rightly,

is

is nothing else but the Imitation of Christ.

Application.

See whether there appear in you any Feature of the Son of God, and whether any man, seeing you act as you do, will be apt to take you for a Disciple of Christ.

Sentences.

Magister, sequar te quocunque ieris. Matth. 8.

Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.

Sine causa sum Christianus, si Christum non sequor. S. Bern.

I am a Christian to little purpose, if I do not follow Christ.

The

The Thirtieth DAY.

Of Zeal in the Service of God.

I. LEt us have as much Zeal for God, as he has for us: and let us promote our Salvation with the ſame Earneſtneſs God himſelf does. All that he acts without himſelf is for the perfecting our Souls. All the deſires of his heart, all the Cares of his Providence, all the Tenders of his Mercy do aim at this. How juſt matter of Confuſion is this, to a luke-warm Soul!

2. If a Man were to judge of God by our ſloth and ſtupidity, one would be apt to think, he were not worth the

the ſerving, and that his Rewards were very inconſiderable. What Opinion can we have of that Maſter, whoſe Servants ſerve him negligently, and without affection? We do diſhonour God, and diſparage his Service, whenever we do that which he deſires of us, coldly and careleſly. Wo be to him that does the Work of the Lord negligently.

3. One Action done for God, be it as little as it will, is more worth a Thouſand times, than all the Atchievements of Heroes and Conquerours. If a man vaunts himſelf ſo much for his Courage

rage in attempting vain things, how much more juſtly may he glory, when he exerts it in the purſuit of Heaven? What! the Servants of the Devil do not ſpare themſelves, they give back at nothing, they never bemoan themſelves whatever trouble they undergo. Is Jeſus Chriſt leſs conſiderable than the Devils? Is Paradiſe leſs worth than Hell? Ah! Hell hereafter ſhall be my School. To love God as much as the Damn'd hate him, to ſerve God as men ſerve the World and the Devil, ſure this can't be too much.

Appli-

Application.

Examin your Behaviour in the Service of God. Mark those Actions wherein you are most remiss and sluggish; and endeavour so to awaken and stir up your self, that you may perform 'em hereafter in a manner worthy of such a Master.

Sentences.

Spiritu ferventes, Domino servientes. Rom. 12.

Fervent in Spirit, serving the Lord.

Quales impetus habebas ad mundum, tales habeas ad Artificem mundi. S Aug.

Have the same Passion for the Creator of the World, which you have had for the World it self.

A Prayer

The Thirty first DAY.

Of Humility.

1. HUmility, which is here rank'd the last in order of Christian vertues, is indeed the first and Foundation of all the rest: Without this we build upon the Sand, and the least Storm that is rais'd against it, overthrows the Edifice; This is (as it were) the lowest Round of that *Jacob*'s ladder, which we must first enter upon before we can climb up higher towards Heaven, and no arriving there, unless we begin our progress at ths Foot of the Ascent.

2. What

2. What throw down the Angels from Heaven, and our first Parents out of Paradise? what drove *Herod* and *Nebuchadnezzar* from their Thrones, and caus'd the one to be devour'd by Worms, and the other to be degraded to the conversation of wild Beasts? but the want of this Humbleness of mind, the having whereof will advance us to higher Thrones than those proud Monarchs once injoy'd; and restore us to a better Paradise than *Adam* lost.

3. There is nothing wherein our blessed Saviour does so much propose himself for a Pattern, and more press our Imitation

Imitation of him, than in this grace of Humility, Mat. 11. 29. Learn of me (says he) for I am meek, and lowly in heart he does not say, learn of me to be wise, just and good; though he taught and practised these things, and wou'd have us to follow him therein; whether does he say, learn of me to work miracles; tho even this we may hope to do by his assistance, when his Church's Need requires it: but learn of me to be humble, and ye shall find rest to your Souls, none ever stoop'd so low as the Holy Jesus in the exercise of this self denying Duty on earth, and none was ever advanc'd

vanc'd ſo high for it in the Court of Heaven.

Application.

Proſtrate your ſelf at the feet of Jeſus, and in thy humble poſture beg of Him Humility, and that you may be never proud of This, or any other Grace or Gift, which He is pleaſed to beſtow upon you.

Sentences.

Omnis qui humiliat exaltabitur, & quiſe exaltat humiliabitur. Luk. 14. 11.

Whoſoever exalteth himſelf ſhall be abaſed and he that humbleth himſelf ſhall be exalted.

D. Bernard.

Est Humilitas, &c. *hæc in affectu, illa in cognitione consistit,* &c.

There is an Humility of the understanding, and also of the affections; by the former, we know what nothings we are, and this we learn from our selves, and our own infirmities, by the latter we trample upon the glory of the world; and this we learn from Him, who emptyed himself, and who being call'd to a Kingdom, fled from it, but being call'd to Reproaches and the Cross, did not fly, but willingly offer'd himself.

A Prayer

A Prayer to God:

Which a Chriſtian Soul may repeat every day, expreſſing what thoſe Sentiments are, which it deſires to have in the hour of Death: In which you may behold the Acts of all the moſt exalted Vertues, and eſpecially of a true Contrition for ſin, and of a perfect love towards God.

MY Lord, and my God! in this uncertainty of the Time, and Place, and Manner of my Death, in which it is thy Will, that I ſhould live, I deſire to adore the Methods of thy Providence in all, which thou haſt been pleaſed to ordain concerning it from all Eternity; and not knowing what may be the Sentiments of my Soul

at that time: I do at preſent what I deſire ſhould be done then; and I beſeech thee to ratifie and accept then, that which I now declare and proteſt before thee.

I thank thee then, my Lord, and my God, at preſent! for in the laſt moment of my life, 'tis poſſible, bereaved of Speech and Reaſon, I ſhall not be able either to ſpeak to, or think of, thee. I thank thee, I ſay, that thou haſt given me a being, thou mighteſt have left me for ever in my firſt nothing: I thank thee, that thou haſt given me Birth, in a Chriſtian-Age, and Country, when I might have been born

born in an Age and Country of Paganiſm. I thank thee that thou haſt regenerated me by Baptiſm.

I adore thee O thou fountain of my Life of Nature! O thou fountain of my Regeneration by Grace! O thou ultimate end of my Soul! and my utmoſt felicity in Glory! Thou art the prime Truth, and I believe unchangeably that which thou doſt ſay. Thou art the ſovereign Faithfulneſs, and I inceſſantly hope for that which thou doſt promiſe. Thou art the ſupreme Good, and I love thee only, and deſire to do ſo for ever.

'Tis

'Tis thou, O my God! Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt, One in Eſſence, and three in Perſons, who has created me by an Effect of thy Power, who has redeem'd me by an exceſs of thy Love, who haſt ſanctified me by the Infuſion of thy Grace, who haſt conducted me by the Rules of thy Providence, and haſt deſtined me to the Participation of thy Glory.

For this end thou haſt admitted me into the Boſom of the Church thy Spouſe; and in it haſt guided me by the cleareſt Lights: thou haſt prevented me with thy moſt holy Graces, and haſt inſpired

red me with the moſt tender Paſſions, and haſt prepared for me thy moſt glorious Sacraments, thou haſt refreſh'd me with the Body and Blood of my Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, thy only Son; and haſt often ſpread abroad in my Heart, the Graces and the Gifts of thy Holy Spirit.

How much Love! How many Benefits! How many Honours! How many Favours! How many Graces! How many Mercies has this poor Soul receiv'd? which for all thoſe Kindneſſes which thou haſt done it, whereof thou only knoweſt the Number and the Value, returns thee

thee nothing but Acts of Impiety, Infidelity, Ingratitude, nothing but Tranſgreſſions and Grimes more numerous than the hairs of my head, or the days of my life.

But O my God; the more I have to be aſhamed of, in having offended thee, the more will be thy Glory in pardoning me; ſins without number ſuch as mine, ſtand in need of Mercies without bounds, ſuch as are thine.

Therefore my Lord, and my God! I fly to thy boundleſs Mercies, being ſorry at my Heart, that I have provoked thee ſo long, that I have known thee ſo late, and loved

ved thee ſo little; and were I never to have more than this moment, I would imploy it in loving thee, O thou Soveraign Good! becauſe thou art that which thou art, and becauſe thou alone doſt merit the Love and Adoration of all thy Creatures.

Here in thy preſence, O Eternal Love! who will be for ever lovely, and never loved enough, I do deteſt all the Sins of my life, becauſe they are repugnant to thy adorable Sanctity; and I deteſt theſe my Sins on the ſame Motives, on which Jeſus Chriſt deteſted them in his Agony in the Garden: and upon the ſame Mo-

Motives for which thou, O my God, Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt, One in Eſſence, and Three in Perſons, doſt deteſt 'em.

And *I* offer thee for reparation of theſe outrages my ſins have done thee, the Love, Obedience and Merits of my bleſſed Lord and Saviour; and *I* ſubmit to this death, as the juſt Puniſhment of my ſin, having been a Traitor; and diſloyal to thee, and therefore moſt juſtly ſentenced to death; *I* moſt willingly ſubmit to the deſtruction of this Body which has been the Foundation of ſo many *Intemperances*, and the *Inſtrument*

ſtrument of ſo many ſins. *I* ſubmit to the Deſtruction of my preſent being, in Obedience to that Soveraign Dominion which thou haſt over me; *I* ſubmit to all the Deſertions, all the Troubles, all the Agonies, all the Pains, all the Temptations, and all the evils which thou haſt reſerved for my Sins and offences, being all the Satisfaction *I* am able ſo make to thy adorable Majeſty.

And being able to do no more, my Lord and my God! *I* beſeech thee to remember, that *I* am the Work of thy hands, the purchaſe of thy Blood, the Conqueſt of thy Croſs

See Author to the Reader where Pyr are miſplaced

Croſs, the Gage of thy Death, and the Effect of thy love. 'Tis to thy Death that *I* unite mine, and to thy Love that *I* unite mine, proteſting that *I* admit no other Sentiments, than agree with the Faith of thy Church, and that *I* admit no other Motions in my Heart, than thoſe of Hope in thy Merits, and love of thy Goodneſs.

If there be any thing in me contrary to this *I* diſown it, *I* retract it; and it is my deſire, that the laſt Motion of my Soul, may be one of Adoration, offering up to thee the Homage of my whole being, which is more thine, than 'tis my

my own; and may it be together a Motion of Love, which loving thee for thy ſelf, may be continued to all Eternity.

'Tis true, O God! that notwithſtanding all this, *I* am under great Fears, becauſe my Crimes are ſo great, and thy Judgments ſo terrible: But it is alſo true, that notwithſtanding my Fears, my hopes are greater, becauſe thou art Mercy and doſt pardon, becauſe thou art great mercy, and doſt pardon without bounds; becauſe thou art all Mercy, nay Mercy it ſelf, and doſt pardon all.

Full of this Amorous and ſweet confidence which *I* have in thee, *I* hope to behold thy Glory

Glory in the Land of the Living; thoſe [*I* mean] of whom thou art the Reſurrection and the Life: And therefore after *I* have again adored thy Power, which created me, thy Goodneſs which redeem'd me, thy Wiſdom which has enlightned me, thy Providence which has governed me, thy Mercy which has ſo often pardoned me; *I* alſo adore thy Juſtice, and ſubmit my ſelf to it, for that moment it has decreed to judge me.

And *I* ſubmit with this Confidence, that thy Mercy will not forſake me, that that will anſwer for me before thy Juſtice: and that *I* ſhall for ever ſing of thy Mercies: So be it *Amen.*

FINIS.